

# THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



*Boris Artzybasheff from the John D. Merriam Collection*

*Annual Report 1994-1995*



# THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

## *Annual Report*

For the Year Ending June 30, 1995



Document 15

The Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston

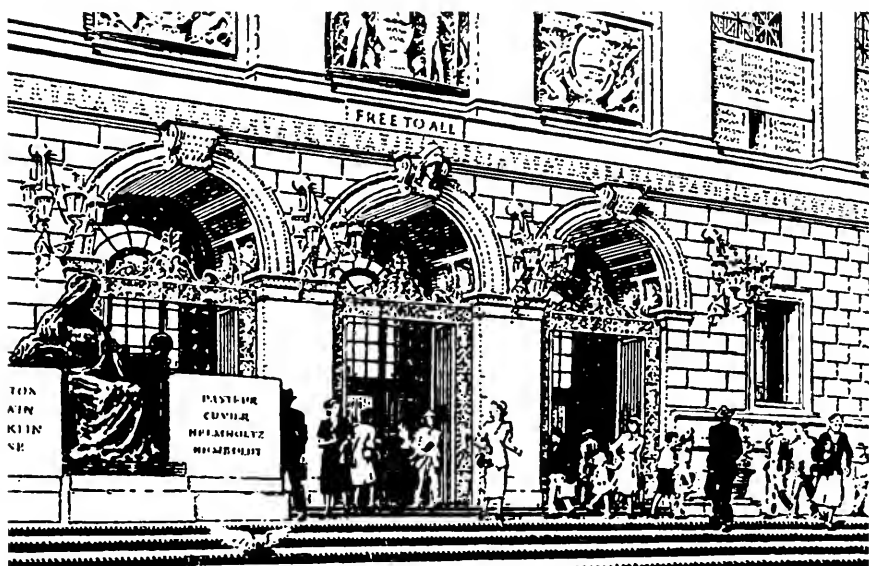
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## MISSIONS POSSIBLE

Since the BPL began in two-room quarters on Mason Street in 1854, it has seen growth in structures and mission. In celebration of its Centenary in 1953/1954, the main goals cited were need for more shelf space, breathing space, and work space.

On December 11, 1972, the opening of the great structure designed by architect Philip Johnson exceeded the missions expressed more than one hundred years earlier. At the opening festivities, poet David McCord reminded the gathering, "The real books set their hooks in your brain." And Mayor Kevin White commented: "Even this stately hall is nothing more than a granite building — full of paper and film and tape recorders — until it is brought to life by real people in the greatest imaginable numbers." Publicity releases at the time described the building as a "steadfast ship carrying a cargo of wealth as it enters a new period of library service."



*Illustration by Rudolph Ruzicka*

In May 1994, following the official reopening of the McKim building, the magnificent "people's palace" again symbolized the changing face of BPL structures and once again emerged as the most beautiful public building in America. With Phase I now completed, the McKim building boasts the restoration of both art and utilitarian essentials. From the vaulted mosaic ceiling and brass-ornamented floor of the lobby, up the great staircase flanked by the restored Puvis de Chavannes murals, the building glows with refurbished marble and bronze and canvas. And for the greater convenience and mobility of patrons there are new elevators, modern rest rooms, and handicap access. The basement, formerly a place of pipes and dark storage areas, is now reached by a marble stairway leading to new public areas. Today the restoration continues, promising complete renovation of Bates Hall and the adjacent areas on the second floor extending over to the northwest staircase and down to a renovated Newspaper Room.

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SPECIAL CENTENNIAL '98 ISSUE

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# NEWSLETTER

The FRIENDS of The HYDE PARK BRANCH LIBRARY

## A Capital Plan!

*Friends of The Hyde Park Branch Library issued a special edition of their newsletter in celebration of the plan for restoration.*

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FY95 saw other major plans for building restorations. At Hyde Park Branch in March, Mayor Menino assembled city department heads and library officials to unveil Boston's Five-Year Capital Plan, 1996-2000, which includes the renovation and expansion of Hyde Park Branch and a new branch library for the Allston neighborhood.

### A CHRONICLE OF CHANGES

Again and again the message of FY95 was one of moves and changes to increase space and to improve efficiency. The lower level and first floor

of the McKim building were dramatically renovated; the Government Documents Department was moved to new quarters, and the Dartmouth Street entrance was opened once again. Development of the Norwood facility for remote storage and statewide distribution of services progressed with a continuing need to develop routines and procedures.

Interlibrary Loan moved from the second floor of the Johnson building to a space carved out of Resources and Processing on the third floor, making it possible to unite Interlibrary Loan and Telefax functions and staff. Prints were moved from the Print Department area to the jurisdiction of the Fine Arts Department.

In the General Library, the newly renovated Children's Room was re-opened. Thanks to the generosity of Robert Artick in memory of his wife Elvira Vecchione Artick, the room was transformed into a lively, beckoning, colorful center of books, programs, and activities. The direction of central and branch services to children and young adults was this year strengthened through the reinstatement of the position of Coordinator of Youth Services. The Access Center was integrated as part of the Adult Readers and Information Services of the General Library. Change and still more change was the touchstone of FY95.

### **Change Revealed in Catalog Subject Headings**

Probably no more visible proof of changing priorities in the world served by the Library exists than in the hundreds of new subject headings introduced in FY95. To read them is to see a fascinating range of good news and bad in our nation and beyond.

To cite a few headings: Antitakeover strategies; Beepers; Brownouts; Downsizing of organizations; Psychological abuse; Attention deficit disorder in adults; Computer hackers; Hair growth stimulants; Telephone sex; and Grandparents as parents.

And the list is endless. There's human genome; Nanny placement agencies; Tae kwon do; Internet advertising; Monoxidil; True crimes television programs; Husband abuse; Gay military cadets; Patterning therapy; Womanist theology; Psychic readings; Gambling on Indian reservations; and Roadside litter.

And so it is that the pains and plusses of being alive today shout out in something as seemingly mundane as the library catalog.

## **YEAR OF THREATENED BUDGET CUTS and LOSS OF FUNDING**

In the year of his presidency of the American Library Association, Library Director Arthur Curley joined Patricia Glass Schuman, past president, in a Kick-Off Campaign for "Getting the Message to Congress," a crucial call for federal funding. Novelist E. L. Doctorow was quoted: "The three most important documents a free society gives are a birth certificate, a passport, and a library card." Postcards were circulated by The City-Wide and neighborhood Friends Groups for mailing to legislators during National Library Week. The campaign was non-stop.

Thanks to efforts of the Boston Public Library Foundation and Bay State Congressmen to secure funding from the federal government for the proposed \$50 million restoration of the McKim, a National Historic Landmark building, a \$2 million grant was announced this year by the Department of the Interior Historic Preservation Trust. The "push was on" and continues as this report goes to press.

Syndicated columnist Bob Greene joined the cry for help: "Maybe it's just another sign of the times," he wrote. "Money is scarce, and downtown areas of big cities aren't what they once were, and there are so many demands for public funds. A library is just a library. Except we all know that it is so much more."

He quoted the late Robert Kennedy: "For there is another kind of violence, slower but just as deadly destructive as the shot or the bomb in the night. This is the violence of institutions; indifference and inaction and slow decay." And Greene added: "When you close the doors of a library, you can hear the echoes of the slam forever."

In still another column, Greene turned to comments by some well-known Americans on the importance of libraries in their childhood and adult lives: Ed Bradley, correspondent, "60 Minutes," remembered his childhood in Philadelphia: "The library was a window to the world, a pathway to worlds and people far from my neighborhood." And former TV anchor Walter Cronkite: "Without [the library] untold numbers of our citizens would be deprived of the means to serve their curiosity, would be deprived of learning, would be deprived of the very foundations of an education. Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation."



Another group of people paying testament to libraries was represented right here in Boston by homeless Michael Brennan. Interviewed by *The Boston Globe* in 1991, he said, "I learned enough at the Boston Public Library last summer to transform me from a homeless, ex-con, day laborer into a full-time free-lance writer in less than a year."

### **"I HAVE A QUESTION"**

For the third year in a row, Telephone Reference increased the number of questions it answered for the public. The FY95 report notes: "The variety of people's questions tests our professional and personal skills," requiring a "change of gears mentally." Besides saying "hello" and "good-bye," much has been done to streamline department operations.

Another DIALOG password has been acquired to prevent long waits by the public; a "QUICKREF" looseleaf combines the "Reference Information" and "Libraries Guide" notebooks.

Even as they answer the ringing phones, staff are planning additional tools and time-savers for their service. Although not officially adopted, the staff follows the motto: "So many questions, so little time." In FY95 a total of telephone queries numbered 56,092; and Information Desk queries, 66,838.

### **A GREAT REPORT CARD**

In its inspection of the Government Documents Department of the Boston Public Library as a Federal Depository Library, the U.S. Government Printing Office identified the areas of successful operation and those needing improvement. In the six years since the last inspection, the Library emerged on the plus side with seven areas in compliance and only one, falling slightly short in maintenance of records of holdings, in noncompliance.

Unique in the 8th Congressional District as the only public library serving as a depository, the Boston Public Library is proud to receive such a report card. The Government Documents Department has always achieved high marks in all areas of service from quick retrieval of users' requests to special booklists, and other in-demand publications. The present favorable government report results, in part, from several significant improvements and changes in the McKim

restoration. In the words of the report, "The environmental factors in this library have changed dramatically since the last inspection. There is now air conditioning, humidity control, and the storage area has been waterproofed." Other quantum leaps of the department relate to personal computers organized in a local area network and faxes for the staff; and for users, state-of-the-art electronic searching capabilities and microfiche reader/printers have been provided.

## **FOR THE BUSINESS WORLD**

In giving a profile of users in FY95, Kirstein Business Branch noted a continuing trend of more investors and fewer job seekers. Many groups and agencies send their clients to Kirstein. Among them: WBZ's Call for Action program, U.S. Small Business Administration, Service Corporation of Retired Executives, Internal Revenue Service, Social Law Library, and business schools.

Staff of the branch offered fourteen tours, among them: students from an Import-Export Seminar at Minuteman Technical Institute, members of an investment club of Boston City Hall, a group of Independent Career Counselors, and students from the Burdett School and Boston University's School of Management.

## **A MECCA OF ART**

For artists, art galleries, architects, authors, art and architectural historians, students, auctioneers — an endless list of patrons — the Fine Arts Department is a unique Mecca of information. Usage statistics for FY95 confirm this dramatically. For example, phone reference questions rose by 2.9% and in-person reference queries were up by 2.5%. The statistics for reading room use and inquiries and phone queries were the highest recorded by the department in the past ten years.

Behind this evidence of public service, the staff were busy selecting significant acquisitions, sorting and indexing special collections, and maintaining files, all activities that cannot be quantified here; but the department qualifies as a magnificent Mecca.

## **GROWTH / ACTIVITY / CHANGE**

Space here defies listing all of this year's activities, the increasing reliance on electronic equipment, and staff achievements in each

department, office, or branch of the Library. Exclusion here does not diminish the volume and importance of work achieved.

Science Reference undertook a major weeding of the collection in anticipation of the department's move to new quarters in the restored basement. The Social Science Department, with virtually no work space, dealt effectively with substantial increases in reference services while consolidating the reference collection for both the move to temporary quarters during the renovations and subsequent new permanent quarters in Bates Hall. Humanities Reference noted this year a considerable rise in the number of in-person inquiries (probably because of the Dartmouth Street opening) and great numbers (185) of on-line searches.

## **IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO DO SO MANY THINGS**

Once described by David McCord as "a venture into the undeveloped field of geriatrics," the Library's Never Too Late Group was founded in 1950 by a committee of senior adults, a social worker, and two library staff members. The group is the longest existing library-sponsored program for senior adults in the country. And since its beginnings, it has grown and grown and grown. In FY95 the mailing list numbered more than two thousand; and the attendance every Thursday afternoon from September through June ranges from 150 to 350. Almost 8,000 people attended the 35 programs presented in FY95.

Based on the philosophy that it is never too late to gain new knowledge, to discover new interests, and meet new friends, down the years the programs have appealed to diverse interests and drawn distinguished guests to the dais, among them Dr. Paul Dudley White. In celebration of its 45th anniversary this year, the Never Too Late Group assembled eight impressive panelists in the field of aging to focus on a range of issues leading to resolutions for submission to the White House Conference on Aging.

## **THE BPL THINKS POSITIVE**

This year's reports repeatedly showed pictures of increase and growth in users, reference queries, walk-in patrons, program attendance, availability of CD-ROM databases and work stations, acquisition of

items for special collections, microfilm sets, an unending picture of transmission on the information highways, which leads to and from the BPL.

In a continuing effort to monitor the Boston Public Library's performance in circulation and services, we have tracked and compared average performances among a comparable group of municipal public library systems since FY93 — Baltimore, Detroit, Washington, D.C., Milwaukee, New Orleans, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and Seattle. Relative to the average among these libraries, the BPL showed the following in FY95:

- 84% higher in the percent of the population registered for library cards;
- 19% higher in circulation per capita \*
- 44% higher in reference transactions per capita; and
- 31% higher in program attendance per capita.

\* One sanguine report of the circulation of materials for the Adult Services Department in Central said that circulation “skyrocketed” this year, and attributed the phenomenal increase to excellent book selection, knowledge of the public's reading tastes, a speedy replacement strategy, and a contract for best sellers.

## **THE BPL MAKES HEADLINES**

In an impressive finale to ten years of fund-seeking, planning, identification and location of newspapers, coordination with public and private publishers and organizations, microfilming, and much more, the Library concluded the Massachusetts Newspaper Program. In 1986 the Library became the coordinating institution for the Program under the aegis of the United States Newspaper Program. Funding has come from several sources including the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Higher Education Act Title II Program of the U.S. Department of Education, and Harvard University. The concluding year of the project brought added inclusions to the newspapers originally scheduled for microfilming including the publications of the American Jewish Historical Society.

As the Program reached its finale, the official count of catalog records numbered 8,127, and local data records mounted to 18,379.

## ANNIVERSARIES

Celebrating the 100th birthday of Boston comedian Fred Allen, the Never Too Late Group presented a reception and slide lecture by Robert Taylor, author of *Fred Allen: His Life and Wit*.

ROBERT TAYLOR



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*Robert Taylor is  
photographed here  
cutting the Fred  
Allen birthday cake*

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Another anniversary was celebrated by the Music Department. Their remembrance took the form of a major exhibition, "Happy 100th, Mr. Pops," paying tribute to Boston's renowned Arthur Fiedler.

And the Music Department hosted a second anniversary in observance of the arrival in the Library of the Allen S. Brown Music Collection one hundred years ago.

As Sinclair H. Hitchings, Keeper of Prints, noted report,

"We are in the arts and crafts years now; almost every month brings a significant anniversary from a hundred years ago, when Boston briefly became the center of the arts and crafts in America." In observance of 1895, the great poster year, the Print Department offered two major, significant exhibitions titled "Boston's Art of the Poster" and "Posters by Ethel Reed." "Boston's Art of the Poster" linked the poster makers of a century before with Boston's present-day poster designers.

## BOOKS ON THE SUPERHIGHWAY?

A whole new language, arcane until you “get into” electronic communication, seems at times to be supplanting the work of lexicographers. The code-breakers of World War II had an easy time of it compared to decoding today’s vocabulary of the computer, old words with new meanings, new words or initialisms. There are icons and toolbars, bullets and bulletin boards, status lines and mouse technology, clicks and Ctrl’s — the list is endless and growing.

As the means and modes of electronic communication burgeoned in FY95, the BPL — and libraries everywhere — headed into a period of reflection, debate, crisis, decision-making. Will books become obsolete? How does the library balance its budget between print and hardware/software? How does the library serve children and adults who may now be stumbling, but soon will be running on the superhighway? So many questions, how many answers?

In a fascinating history of the book/library movement from Alexandria to today, *Boston Globe* writer Mark Feeney in “Shelf Life” (5 June 1994) summed it up this way: “Words on paper, words on a screen: Either way, public libraries are still providing knowledge to anyone willing to take the trouble to sign up for a card.” He concluded, quoting BPL Director Arthur Curley: “All these new vistas opened up by technology are extremely exciting. Yet while they expand the library’s mission, they don’t change it. The child who’s inspired by a picture book is still going to be inspired by that picture book. Maintaining this balance between old and new will be a perplexing task, but we’re not about to give up one part of our mission simply because there’s a certain glamour attached to another part of it.”

Maintaining that balance in FY95, Boston’s young people reached the “on-ramp” of the superhighway via what is called the “BPL/BPS Gateway System,” now fully operational. In this major step forward, Boston schools are linked with Library resources, numbering more than 6 million books and 1,000 periodicals, as well as gaining an access point to the Internet. Seen as the most important step the schools can take in the instructional use of technology and telecommunications, this computer linkage means that Boston Public School students at selected locations will have direct access to the Boston Public Library’s numerous catalogs and databases, as well as the

holdings of all the MBLN member libraries. Also during FY95, through special funding via the Boston Public Library Foundation, microcomputers were placed in all of the branches' children's areas and in the General Library Children's and Young Adult rooms, thus providing young library patrons with the same capabilities that the students have in the schools.

For those seeking answers via the latest in communication, the BPL's Internet address is WWW.BPL.ORG.

## **THE LIBRARY and A DISTINGUISHED AUTHOR**

In April 1995, a major award for worldwide fiction published or translated into English was heralded in Dublin, The International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award. The Boston Public Library was invited to nominate books for consideration and then a judge.

Bostonian Robert Taylor, with numerous ties to the Library, was selected as one of five panelists who will make the first IMPAC award in 1996. He will join Christopher Hope of Johannesburg, South Africa; Lidia Jorge of the Algarve; Brendan Kennelly of County Kerry, Ireland; and Luisa Valenzuela of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

## **THE LIBRARY AS PUBLISHING HOUSE**

Continuing its role as publishing house, the Library embarked on several ambitious goals in FY95.

In the third creative collaboration, the Boston Public Library Foundation and the Library added parochial and private schools to a competition, which resulted this year in two books, each titled *Boston — Our City*. Elementary young people through the high school grades directed their talents and imagination to representing Boston in photos, drawings, verse, essay, and drama. In the award ceremony for the winners, Boston Public Library Trustee and Senate President William M. Bulger noted that "one cannot pursue education without reading books...one cannot read without becoming more educated."

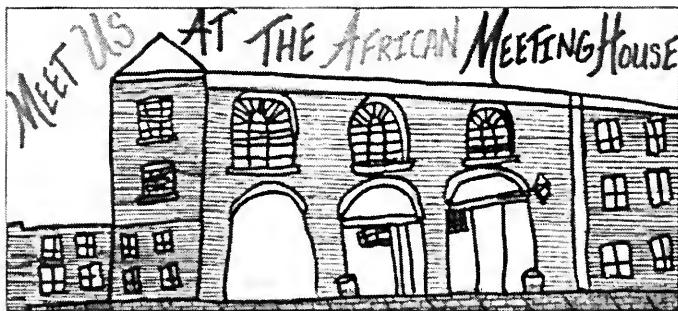
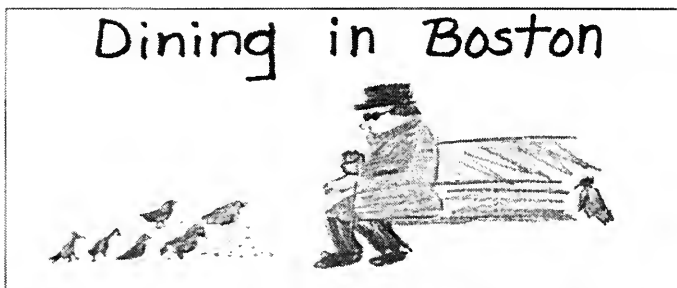
More than seventy-five works are included in this remarkable little book. They are light-hearted and sad, perceptive and delightfully expressed in word and picture. To quote Alirio Moran, in part:

Our library is our blessing,  
a part of Boston . . .  
An oasis, in this  
**Our city!**

And by Kimberly Ann Pecci, a student at Brighton High School:

*I Have Stood on a Hill  
I was born in 1844.  
I originated on  
Upper Academy Hill Road.  
I sent my first graduates  
to Harvard and to Yale.  
My students then  
were not much different  
from the ones today.  
Since 1930  
I have stood on a hill  
next to St. Elizabeth's Hospital.  
Sometimes I am called  
A fortress,  
A jail,  
and even a castle.*

Two drawings by Kenneth Washington and John Lennon add wit and welcome to the book:





Also released this year were numerous handsome, timely booklists for adults, young adults, and children. Among them: "New Age Spirituality," "Sights and Sounds of the Holocaust," "Reading Rainbow," "Black is ...," and "Small Business Blueprint."

In *Castle Island and Fort Independence* by historian/teacher Dr. William J. Reid, the story of a small island in Boston Harbor emerges as a chronicle rife in strategic impact, mystery, tragedy, and social importance since 1638.

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*Dr. Reid describes how renowned builder of clipper ships, Donald McKay, was remembered in a monument on Castle Island close to where McKay's shipyard and dwelling were situated.*

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## **DONORS AND DONATIONS**

Public-spirited people with deep commitment to books this year donated to the buildings and services of the BPL:

A retired teacher at Hyde Park High School, Robert Artick made a major donation in memory of his late wife Elvira Vecchione Artick. His wife, herself a teacher, once said, "If you can read, you can do almost anything." Moved by devotion to Mrs. Artick and his shared

belief in the power of books, Artick gave a substantial gift for the purpose of renovating the Children's Room in the Central Library.

John D. Merriam, a brilliant lawyer and collector of thousands of books and prints, this year bequeathed to the Library probably the largest and most valuable individual donation since Vattermare gave his modest gift of books. The bequest numbered thousands of prints, drawings, illustrated books, and an endowment, all valued at more than three million dollars. Merriam's home so overflowed with his collections that as Keeper of Prints Hitchings put it, "The collector himself slept in a Spartan bed in one small room."

Since 1977, Sinclair Hitchings had worked with John Merriam creating exhibitions and exhibit catalogs drawn selectively from Merriam's collections, particularly illustrated children's books\* and fantasy prints and drawings. In November 1994, Merriam died just at the time a special exhibition titled "Collector's Choice," was underway in the Library's Wiggin Gallery. The collector had looked forward to the show for many years but was unable to attend. With his death, the exhibition time was extended and retitled "To Remember John Merriam." (\*Note the Artzybasheff print on the cover of this report.)

The Boston Public Library Foundation raised \$450,000 at a gala featuring an elegant reception in the McKim building's newly restored foyer and Chavannes Gallery and a dinner under a tent in the central courtyard. Co-hosts were Governor William F. Weld, Senate President William M. Bulger, and Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino.

In their sixth annual "Literary Lights Dinner" the Associates of the Boston Public Library assembled an impressive gathering of authors for the fundraising event. Featured speakers were two distinguished award winners: David McCullough and Saul Bellow. McCullough is particularly known to TV viewers for his TV narrations and as a recently appointed trustee of the Library.

FY95 yielded hundreds of donations in funds and gifts too numerous to recite here, but valuable for the areas that they so generously enriched. There were gifts from government agencies, Friends groups, corporations, and individuals. When Officer DeMarco of the Boston Police Department witnessed the outreach efforts of the children's chess program at Uphams Corner, she recommended and it was awarded a grant from the Department's One Step Closer Neighborhood Policing Project. As a result, the branch purchased four

electronic chess sets and ten self-teaching games with a grant of \$3,000.

At West End Branch a wrought iron fence around the perimeters of the lawns was erected. Funding came from the Browne Fund of the City of Boston with additional funding from the Beacon Hill Garden Club, the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, and the Charles River Park Management Corporation.

Many rare gifts (and purchases) were acquired by the Rare Books and Manuscripts Department. For example, from the deputy archivist of Baring Brothers, London, came a copy of the house correspondence of Joshua Bates when he was a member of that firm. Other rare items included a signed document concerning the sloop *Molley* out of Newport, 1752; and Nathaniel Low's *Astronomical almanaque for the year 1779*.

## PROGRAMS

Without listing all the services to users and tourists, which generate sometimes awesome visitor/patron attendance numbers, we recite here the fact that there were 4,052 programs in FY95 with a total attendance of 135,889. Here is a breakdown of the figures and a sampling of the types of programs offered:

Children's Programs:	2,866	Attendance:	83,334
YA Programs:	109	Attendance:	2,984
Adult Programs:	1,077	Attendance:	49,571

## SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Part of the Library's greatness as a major research library involves holdings that range from incunabula to silver and gold medals; from the first book published in the colonies to a Joan of Arc collection assembled by Boston-born John Cardinal Wright; from the Robert Feer Collection of World Fairs of North America to the library of Nathaniel Bowditch, the "American Navigator"; from memorabilia of comedian Fred Allen to the personal library of our nation's second president, John Adams. The Special Collections now number more than 200 with virtually hundreds of thousands of individual inclusions.

The Library numbers hundreds of unique exhibits and dioramas among its permanent holdings. There are dioramas crafted by Louise Stimson: The Arabian Nights, Print-makers at Work, The London of Charles Dickens, and (at right) Alice in Wonderland. From the talented fingers of Clare Dennis the Library has more than 350 portrait dolls from literature and life.

Shown here is Alice from a Japanese catalog. Both the Stimson diorama and the Alice dolls by Dennis were exhibited in a chain of Japanese department stores for an *Alice in Wonderland* festival,



## AGE-LEVEL SERVICES

### Children

At Adams Street Branch the Daniel Marr Boys and Girls Club exhibited art works by its students — everything from handmade puppets to gingerbread houses.

East Boston Branch's summer reading program, "Ticket to Read," brought out more than 400 children accompanied by adults during the summer. Children made clown masks, engineer hats, flags, and totem poles, viewed a model railroad car in the display case, and, at the grand finale, ate ice cream.

Egleston Square Branch: Children viewed a performance by the Roxbury Outreach Shakespeare Experience (the ROSE). The bard was brought to life for young people who may have never heard of him or thought he was dull. As the report said, "ROSE makes Shakespeare the rapper of his day."

Parker Hill Branch: A resounding show by The Children's Symphony for Young Audiences. In addition to performing, the group showed how wind goes through the various horns and even used a garden hose to demonstrate another music point.

Another musical series was directed to children by the General Library Children's Room. Music and Movement was designed as eight sessions for ages 3-5.

## **Young Adults**

At South End Branch, in a collaborative, creative effort, the South End Drug-Free Committee of Boston Against Drugs joined forces with the *South End News* to sponsor an essay contest on drugs. The essay winners were feted at a reception funded by the Friends of the South End Branch, and the essays were then exhibited. At Brighton Branch an ex-gang member presented an anti-drug, anti-crime program.

And in a quite different focus, young people at Jamaica Plain attended their first young adult program at that branch: a performance by the Roxbury Outreach Shakespeare Experience.

## **Adults**

Brighton Branch hosted a meeting of the Brighton Board of Trade on business information sources at both the branch and Kirstein Business Branch. In still another focus on business, Grove Hall Branch sponsored a series of seven marketing and sales training seminars for minority business people. Like so many library programs, this series was a collaborative effort, in this case involving the Neighborhood Development Corporation of Grove Hall and the City of Boston's Public Facilities Department.

Charlestown Branch featured a slide tour of the Boston Harbor Islands, a unique Boston State Park. And still another "living history"

experience was the presentation at Codman Square of *Company A: 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry* re-enactors who depicted the first black regiment raised in the North during the Civil War. Another reenactment was performed by Supervisor of Neighborhood Library Services Gloria Tibbs in her role as Elizabeth Eckford, the Little Rock student who attempted to integrate Central High School in 1957.

## **Programs Ethnic and Cultural**

Faneuil Branch celebrated St. Patrick's Day with an Irish Step Dance performance by girls ages 6-14 wearing traditional costumes. Pots of gold, various Irish breads and cookies, and special hats were part of the day.

Fields Corner: "A Cup of Beauty," an exhibition of paintings, crafts, poetry, and narratives by Vietnamese Boat People.

Mattapan Branch: a storyteller entertained with tales from the Caribbean and a Kwansaa program.

Roslindale: a Black History Month program for children was conducted by actor, poet, and storyteller Rachelle Garner Coleman about Nat Love, a slave born in Tennessee who went west at the age of fifteen to seek freedom and equal opportunity.

South Boston: the 15th annual Memorial Lecture in memory of Marjorie M. Gibbons featured the Rev. Albert Contons, pastor of St. Peter's Lithuanian Church, speaking on "A Century of Lithuanians from the Baltic Sea to South Boston."

Connolly: In memory of children's librarian Edith Bravo, who died this year, the staff and friends of Connolly Branch sponsored a memorial program to purchase books in Spanish for the branch.

The General Library Children's Room put together a veritable tapestry of ethnic programs and activities: With Russian focus: two Russian ballets, a puppet show titled "A Russian Cinderella," and a workshop on Ukrainian collage. With Chinese emphasis: workshops on mask making, rice dough sculpture, and Chinese brush painting by the Chinese Culture Connection, as well as five origami workshops on Sundays.

## **Other Programs of Creativity**

West Roxbury, in the spirit of several branch program efforts that focused on creativity from art to music to drama to writing,

entered its seventh year of the Intergenerational Poetry Contest. The effort has yielded some dynamic spin-offs: writing workshops, judging each year of some 450 to 550 poems, a peer-led writers' group, and more and more.

The Young Adults Room witnessed increased attendance and excitement over this year's creative writing workshop. Featured was author Chris Lynch who, as the report notes, was always popular but became "hot" because of his recently-published *Gypsy Davy*.

### **Other Collaborative Programs**

The history of the Library continues to be one of collaboration with educational, community, special interest, governmental, and age-level groups. This year was no exception, as indicated by several activities already cited. One such rewarding collaboration was involvement with MOST (Making the Most of After School Time for School Age Children). This enabled the Library to promote and demonstrate to After School Time Programs the services offered to their charges.

The Special Projects arm of Community Library Services continued a collaboration described by Special Projects Librarian Ellen Graf as "a triad of libraries, bookstores, and publishers that brings to the Library some of the most talented and distinguished writers — among them, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Joseph Heller, Joyce Carol Oates, P. D. James, Sister Souljah, Betty Friedan, and Nadine Gordimer." WOW!

The Music Department continued its cooperative microfilming of the scrapbooks of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Codman Square Branch hosted four fall Saturday workshops sponsored by The House of Have a Heart, an umbrella organization which includes Catholic Charities, Project IMPACT, and Children's Services of Roxbury.

### **Annual Programs**

North End: The 47th annual Mary U. Nichols Program featured the awarding of books to two students for "excellence in English" and Inga Boudreau, newly appointed Coordinator of Youth Services as speaker.

South Boston: 23rd annual Art Festival. In addition to a display of art by local artists, there were two performances of "Strangers," a play by local playwright, director, and actor Thomas Sypek.

## REACHING THE DISABLED AND HOMEBOUND

In its materials, equipment, programming, and building adaptations, the Library moved forward in welcoming and serving patrons with specials needs. To name just a few examples:

A dynamic Deaf Awareness program, planned by Kathleen Hegarty under the auspices of the Access Services section of the General Library, reached two audiences, deaf adults and students from schools for the deaf. The presenter, Alec Naiman, an independent photojournalist, discussed in voice-interpreted sign languages his work with deaf people in Beirut in 1989 and deaf refugees in Thailand in 1991.

Staff of the Mobile Library Services Department made a total of 476 visits to deposit collection sites and homebound individuals reaching a total of 6,866 people.

## AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE

The Audiovisual Department continued its popular film series this year highlighting Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Lauren Bacall, and westerns.

The most dramatic increase was in the circulation of non-print media (videos, audio-cassettes, compact discs, and recordings):

	FY94	FY95	% Increase
GLAV	62,669	97,250	18%
Branches	25,676	30,360	55%
Total	88,345	127,610	44%

More and more, first-time patrons, children, young adults, and newly arrived immigrants used the department.

## SERVICE TO NEW AMERICANS

In the twenties, when thousands of arrivals were answering the statue's call of "Give us your tired, your huddled masses," the Library offered evening courses for immigrants learning English and preparing for citizenship. Down the years that commitment continues and has accelerated.

In 1984 the Library received a federal LSCA Title I grant to build special collections for adults learning English. In 1987 the *Boston Globe* Foundation donated half a million dollars to establish an



endowment for reading enhancement programs and collections. And the Library embarked on system-wide coordination of literacy activities. Most recently the City-Wide Friends launched a pilot literacy program specifically geared to ESL (English as a Second Language) students. Volunteers were trained to serve as tutors.

In addition to working jointly with the Friends, the Special Projects Office has assisted with "Conversation Tables," an offshoot of the ESL tutoring activity. In this small-group format, students from all over the world have an opportunity to improve their English.

Partnerships continued with the Jewish Vocational Service Family Literacy Program and the Young Lawyers Section of the Boston Bar Association.

Busy, busy marks the Library's service for ESL adults, the elderly, the disabled, and low-income people in everything from learning English to income tax preparation.

## **CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

It has been said that the philosopher Immanuel Kant, whose thoughts so influenced the world's thinkers, never went beyond the bounds of his hometown Königsberg. Here in this remarkable public library and its branches, we have worlds within worlds, worlds that have no walls, no bounds. Kant is here and Königsberg and all the thinkers, artists, poets, historians — all the movers and shakers of history who accept your company, feed your mind, and touch your soul.

In his speech at the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the McKim building, Vartan Gregorian, past president of the New York Public Library and present president of Brown University, put forth many moving, quotable truths about libraries. Listen to just a part of his definition:

"Libraries have always occupied a central role in our culture. They contain our nation's heritage, the heritage of humanity, the record of its triumphs and failures, the record of mankind's intellectual, scientific and artistic achievements. They are the diaries of the human race, the instruments of civilization, a laboratory of human endeavor, a window of the future, a source of hope, a source of self-renewal. They are the symbol of our community with mankind. They represent the link between the solitary individual and mankind which is our community."

## **LIBRARY RESOURCES**

### **General Book Collections**

Volumes	6,581,736
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### **Special Collections**

Rare Books and Manuscripts	1,284,740
Prints	1,239,560
Patents	9,759,106
Maps	372,929
Government Documents	2,965,436
Musical Scores	107,282

### **Periodicals**

Current Subscriptions	18,533
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### **Non-Print Materials**

Audio-Recordings	375,757
Films & Video Cassettes	20,509
Microforms	5,457,159

## **LIBRARY USE**

Visitors	2,137,130
Programs	4,052
Program Attendance	135,889
Items Borrowed	2,385,422
Volumes Consulted	976,033
Reference Inquiries	1,459,771
Photocopies	1,498,000

# Library Expenditures

	FY93	FY94	FY95
A Salaries and Wages			
City of Boston			
Commonwealth of Massachusetts	\$13,138,582.	\$13,514,650.	\$14,252,328.
State Aid			250,794.
EMRLS*	1,204,615.	1,100,043.	1,209,018.
Library of Last Recourse	2,252,224.	2,420,083.	2,205,597.
Federal/State/Private Grants	<u>195,670.</u>	<u>132,363.</u>	<u>99,669.</u>
TOTAL (A)	\$16,791,091.	\$17,167,139.	\$18,017,406.
B. Books and Other Library Materials			
City of Boston			
Commonwealth of Massachusetts	\$2,301,883.	\$2,271,156.	\$2,327,778.
State Aid			65,706.
EMRLS*	127,439.	96,678.	1,143,259.
Library of Last Recourse	805,494.	1,278,565.	2,446,939.
Trust Fund Income	2,110,094.	2,498,006.	432,761.
Federal Grants	383,943.	380,120.	<u>50,671.</u>
	<u>57,266.</u>	<u>45,598.</u>	
TOTAL (B)	\$5,786,119.	\$6,570,123.	\$6,467,114.
C. All Other Expenses			
City of Boston			
Commonwealth of Massachusetts	\$3,056,594.	\$3,139,342.	\$3,119,894.
State Aid			279,419.
EMRLS*	454,250.	548,273.	874,966.
Library of Last Recourse	745,611.	992,579.	625,239.
Trust Fund Income	258,296.	380,575.	392,879.
Federal Grants	295,296.	301,972.	<u>338,981.</u>
	<u>449,222.</u>	<u>288,537.</u>	
TOTAL (C)	\$5,259,929.	\$5,651,278.	\$5,631,378.
GRAND TOTAL (A, B, & C)	\$27,837,139.	\$29,388,540.	\$30,115,898.

\* Eastern Massachusetts Regional Library System



*This early postcard of the McKim Building, complete with trolley, carriage, and a lady with a fancy hat was distributed by the Metropolitan News Company in Boston and made in Germany. Postage for postcards at the time were one cent for the United States and Island Possessions, Cuba, Canada, and Mexico. Two cents for foreign.*

*Libraries are as old as civilization — the object of pride, envy and sometimes senseless destruction. From the clay tablets of Babylon to the computers of a modern library stretch more than five thousand years of man's and woman's insatiable desire to establish written immortality and to insure the continuity of culture, and civilization, to share their triumphs, their memory, their wisdom, their strivings, their fantasies, longings, experiences with mankind and future generations.*

Vartan Gregorian, President, Brown University, from a speech delivered on December 18, 1995, on the occasion of the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the McKim Building.

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